



March 8th, 2023
Education Committee

HB 6842: An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Local Food for Schools Incentive Program and Expansion of The CT Grown for CT Kids Grants Program

Catherine Hallisey, FoodCorps

Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, and Connecticut General Assembly members of the Education Committee. My name is Catherine Hallisey, I am from Wethersfield, CT, and I represent FoodCorps, a national non-profit that operates in the state. Today, I am writing on HB 6842: An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Local Food for Schools Incentive Program and Expansion of The CT Grown for CT Kids Grants Program and to ask for your support in moving this bill forward.

As someone who has worked with and in schools for almost ten years, I have seen the positive impact that connecting students to their local food system can have. In the cafeteria, I have seen a student light up after finding out that the carrots they were being served were from just a few towns over. In the classroom, I have seen students learn how to nurture seeds to fully grown plants, and make the connection that those items are reflected on their lunch tray. Finally, in a time where so many students struggle in the classroom, I have seen those challenges disappear when classes are brought into a garden space to learn.

Moreover, as someone who has also been farming since 2015, I know that increasing Connecticut grown items in schools not only impacts our students, but also our local small-farmers. When farmers are able to sell directly to schools, they keep more food dollars than when selling to other in-direct markets. In a world where small farms are struggling immensely, this is essential.

Ultimately, this program is a win-win investment for our students, farms, and schools. Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

Catherine Hallisey
FoodCorps Impact and Partnership Lead, CT
Wethersfield, CT